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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Initial reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant concerning rights covered by articles 10 to 12, in accordance with the second stage of the programme established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1988 (LX)

Addendum

NICARAGUA

[9 February 1990]

INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of Nicaragua is submitting this initial report in compliance with the rights and obligations covered by articles 10 to 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in the light of the guidelines for the submission of reports contained in Economic and Social Council document E/C.12/1987/2.

2. The considerable delay in this submission has been caused by a number of factors, the principal one being without doubt the extremely serious and exceptional circumstances in Nicaragua from the time President Reagan took office as head of the Government of the United States of America up to the end of his presidential mandate.

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3. All are aware of the judgment by the International Court of justice in The Hague on 27 June 1986, finding the United States Government guilty of violating basic principles of customary international law, such as the non-use of force in international relations, non-intervention in internal affairs and the sovereign equality of the State of Nicaragua. The judgment of the International Court of Justice also states that the United States violated the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation which it concluded with Nicaragua in 1956. Furthermore, the United States Government imposed a complete trade embargo on Nicaragua on 1 May 1985 and the embargo has not been lifted to date.

4. This whole situation of very serious violations of public international law undermines the Nicaraguan people's right to self-determination, which is indissociable from their economic, social and cultural rights. It therefore has an adverse effect on the degree of compliance with the obligations set forth in articles 10 to 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

5. With the new United States administration, the Government of Nicaragua has been tirelessly seeking ways to eliminate the scourge of war by means of various political initiatives to bring about a permanent solution to the conflict in Central America through peaceful settlement of disputes. The international community is well aware of the Government of Nicaragua's full compliance with the Esquipulas II Agreement, the Alajuela Declaration and the Tesoro Beach Agreements, aimed at normalization of diplomatic relations between Nicaragua and the United States and the implementation of a plan to demobilize and disarm the counter-revolution, something it has not yet been possible to achieve.

6. The Central American Presidents, meeting at Tela, in the Republic of Honduras, on 5, 6 and 7 August 1989, adopted the Joint Plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation or relocation in Nicaragua or third countries of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance and their families, as well as assistance for the demobilization of all of those involved in armed actions in the countries of the region when such persons voluntarily request it.

7. Similarly, the Declaration of San Isidro de Coronado, signed by the Central American Presidents on 12 December 1989, supports President Daniel Ortega in his wish to have the funds appropriated for the Nicaraguan resistance turned over to the International Support and Verification Commission (CIAV) as of the signing of the agreement, with a view to implementing the voluntary demobilization, repatriation or relocation in Nicaragua or third countries of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance and their families. It also appeals to the Nicaraguan resistance to cease any action which might jeopardize the electoral process and the civilian population, so that that process might evolve in an atmosphere of normality, in accordance with the Esquipulas II Agreement.

8. Achieving stable conditions of peace, normality and friendly relations with all the countries throughout the world in Nicaragua's deepest wish, one to which it devotes its concern and constant endeavours, and its sincere goal is the regular submission in proper form of the communications it is pledged to submit as a State Party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the other international instruments.

INFORMATION CONCERNING ALL THE RIGHTS RECOGNIZED IN ARTICLES 10 TO 12 OF THE COVENANT

A. Articles 10 and 12: Protection of the family, mothers and children and the right to physical and mental health

9. Throughout its 202 articles, the Constitution of the Republic of Nicaragua, promulgated on 9 January 1987, uses the term "man" in a non-generic sense, i.e. it uses the term person, Nicaraguan or human being; when it speaks of "man" it refers to the male sex and when it speaks of "woman" it refers to the female sex, thus placing each sex in the proper place.

10. Protection of the family takes full account of non-discrimination between men and women and absolute equality before the law. Articles 27 (Equality before the law), 48 (Absolute equality between men and women), 73 (idem) and 82 (Equal pay for equal work) reaffirm this. Thus, the right of Nicaraguan women to equality is guaranteed in the Constitution, and if it is not observed the following safeguard mechanisms are available:

(a) Article 182. (Supremacy of the Constitution.) No law discriminating against women that contradicts or alters constitutional provisions may be implemented;

(b) Article 187. Any citizen has the right to file an appeal regarding the unconstitutionality of any law, decree or regulation that is inconsistent with the Constitution;

(c) Article 188. Recourse of amparo (enforcement of constitutional rights) against any provision, act or ruling, and in general, against any action or omission of any official or authority that violates, or attempts to violate, the rights and guarantees affirmed in the Constitution. All these remedies are lodged with the Supreme Court, the highest of the courts of justice.

11. Regarding the guarantee of the right of men and women to enter into marriage with their free and full consent, in chapter IV of the Constitution, concerning family rights, article 72 states that marriage and stable de facto unions are protected by the State, are based on voluntary agreement between a man and a woman, and may be dissolved by mutual consent or by the will of one of the parties.

12. As to measures to facilitate the establishing of a family, article 70 of the Constitution states that the family is the fundamental nucleus of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State; article 71 also stipulates that it is the right of Nicaraguans to form a family. The law regulates and protects this right.

13. The Nicaraguan Social Security and Welfare Institute (INSSBI), the agency principally dealing with Nicaraguan families, has a family protection programme that goes beyond merely protective action, i.e. beyond requests for alimony, restraining orders on travel and recognition of children; it also provides counselling for family problems such as marital and family conflicts and disputes involving minors.

14. Various legal instruments define and broaden the tasks of the Family Counselling and Protection Office, a division of the INSSBI, including the Labour Code Amendment Act and Family Protection Regulations, the Act regulating Relations between Mother, Father and Children, and the Act on the Dissolution of Marriage Ties.

15. There are also family benefits, intended to foster the forming of workers' families and contribute to the support and education of their children. Workers covered by the INSSBI are also entitled, after a qualifying period of not less than three years, to receive a contribution to marriage costs; the amount shall be at least one month's average wage, calculated as established by the respective regulations, and it shall be granted only once in a person's lifetime.

16. The spouse who is entitled to the maternity allowance is also entitled to receive a family allowance, with a limit of one benefit per family. The family allowance is granted for children under 15 years of age and is renewable if the children continue their studies or become disabled, under the terms set out in the regulations. The allowance shall consist of monthly supplements to the worker's pay or wage and the amount is set according to a sliding scale based on amount of the wage and the number of children.

17. In the respective regulations, the Institute shall also set the other conditions and requirements for granting the family allowance and the grounds for refusal to grant or suspend or terminate any or all of these benefits.

18. Article 74 of the Constitution stipulates that the State shall grant special protection to the process of human reproduction. Women shall have special protection during pregnancy and shall be granted paid maternity leave with all appropriate social security benefits. No one may deny employment to a woman on grounds of pregnancy or dismiss her during pregnancy or the post-natal period; all these benefits apply in conformity with the law.

19. Article 94 of the Social Security Act stipulates that women workers covered by the social security scheme who have paid 16 weekly payments within the 39 weeks preceding the birth are entitled to maternity leave. Similarly, article 95 of the Act establishes that the maternity allowance shall be equivalent to 60 per cent of the average weekly wage, calculated on the same basis as sick pay, and shall be granted for the four weeks preceding and the eight weeks following the birth, during which time the beneficiary must be on leave.

20. According to Ministry of Health statistics, 82,599 pre-natal and 6,635 post-natal check-ups were performed in 1981. The figures rose sharply in 1988, with 124,450 pre-natal and 41,438 post-natal check-ups.

21. The Social Security Act lays down specific measures for helping mothers to support their children in the event of the death or absence of their husbands; these measures include help with funeral expenses, widow's benefits, orphan's benefits and allowances for other surviving dependants.

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22. Articles 75 and 76 of the Constitution stipulate that all children have equal rights. This means that there is no discrimination between children born in or out of wedlock. All children are legitimate. In our legislation, no provisions or classifications that diminish or deny equality among children have any value.

23. Again, the State shall also set up programmes and develop special centres for minors who have the right to any measures of prevention, protection and education they require, from their family, society and the State. Furthermore, the Constitution prohibits the employment of minors in jobs which might be detrimental to their normal development or compulsory education. Children and adolescents are also protected against any form of economic and social exploitation.

24. Child care has been one of the most immediate priorities of Nicaragua's Government, people and revolution, since 19 July 1979. Article 76 of the Constitution establishes that ... "The State shall set up programmes and develop special centres for minors who have the right to any measures of prevention, protection and education they require from their family, society and the State".

25. By virtue of the foregoing, the Nicaraguan Social Security and Welfare Institute, through the Office for the Protection of Minors, has sponsored nationwide action and services which, in addition to dealing comprehensively with the needs of minors, make it easier to include the parents in the country's production process and foster activities to make the family aware of its social responsibility towards the children.

26. The following have been the main developments in the protection of children in Nicaragua:

(a) The reform of the Children's Protection Act and its Regulations and the redrafting of the Adoption Act (1979-1981);

(b) The entry into operation of urban and rural protection centres;

(c) Work with juvenile workers under the Quincho Barrilete Campaign, in conjunction with the National Literacy Crusade, to deal with children's educational and social problems (1980-1982);

(d) The establishment and operation of children's rehabilitation centres, including care for adolescents forcibly inducted into the military units of the National Guard (1979-1981);

(e) The organization and development of children's canteens in rural areas, for the purpose of reducing the malnutrition of children in settlements for persons displaced by the war (1982-1985);

(f) Encouragement of research work on various problems suffered by children (minors at risk, care for psycho-social cases, child abuse, war orphans, etc.) (1982-1985);

(g) Direct work with the community through "community teams", which have engaged in preventive activities with the help of the people (1982-1983).

27. At present the INSSBI can also point to the following achievements in child care in Nicaragua:

(a) The establishment and operation of 248 service centres, including 54 which have been organized and are being administered by communities, enterprises and public and private institutions. A total of 37,394 children are receiving care directly from these centres;

(b) The above statistics are in marked contrast with the figure of two State day-care centres and eight private institutions, all in the urban sector, that were in existence on 19 July 1979;

(c) Because of the priority attached to children in rural areas, principally those living in settlements for the persons displaced by the war, self-defence co-operatives and State production units, the INSSBI has set up 128 centres in the countryside, i.e. 66 per cent of the total number of service units in operation and they look after 68 per cent of the total number of minors receiving protection;

(d) It should also be pointed out that, at the national level, case-by-case attention is given to specific problems of abandonment, ill-treatment and other risk situations. According to the records, an average of 300 cases per month are dealt with throughout the country;

(e) Care is also provided for more than 15,000 minors who have been orphaned because of the hostilities. They are given assistance through financial allowances, assistance for food, clothing and shoes, finding foster homes for them with relatives or internment centres in extreme cases and involving them in cultural, athletic and recreational activities. The humanism underlying our revolution has again been revealed by the fact that assistance is also provided for the children of insurgents who have been abandoned or orphaned;

(f) Despite significant results to date, our juvenile population still suffers from serious problems throughout the country. Our prospects for further achievements in this field are limited, basically by the tensions created by the war of aggression and the economic crisis, for which reason guidelines for our main work are to strengthen preventive activities and combine efforts with institutions, enterprises, communities and other trade union and grass-roots bodies, in the city and the countryside, to create new methods of child care, which will be self-managed.

28. In the pre-revolutionary period, care of the physically disabled was based on medical treatment for certain types of handicaps at centres which treated only persons from the ruling class, and special education and speech therapy were provided by private institutions or volunteer organizations. There was no programme of full treatment for persons suffering from problems connected with alcoholism, drug addiction or prostitution.

29. In striking contrast with this situation, the INSSBI fostered complete rehabilitation of these sectors for the explicit purpose of fully or partly restoring the residual capacities of the disabled, to teach them a new kind of work so as to manage on their own, and conduct rehabilitative and preventive action for the people receiving care and for the community, the idea also being to change values and attitudes and secure social integration of the disabled. The importance attached to these sectors is to be seen in article 62

of the Constitution, which stipulates that "The State shall strive to establish programmes for the physical, psycho-social and occupational rehabilitation of disabled people, and for their job placement".

30. Accordingly, it may be said that the INSSBI has provided the disabled with the physical and human resources needed to make a new life under the best possible conditions. The main achievements of this programme to date have been the following:

(a) Specialized, on-going care for 249 persons in 6 centres, 3 of which provide treatment for 173 physically disabled persons;

(b) Temporary psychological, social and occupational assistance for contingents of war-wounded travelling to or returning from abroad;

(c) Co-ordination with the National Combatants' Support Fund and various public and private entities in providing full treatment for the war-disabled. To this end, the Government plays an important role in operating the National Rehabilitation Plan;

(d) Placing the disabled in jobs that will allow them the maximum development of their remaining capacities.

(e) Strengthening joint action with the National Training System, both in developing courses for job apprenticeships in the urban centres and for extension of training services to the communities;

(f) Continuing work on reducing the number of women who might turn to, or are actually engaged in, prostitution, by conducting preventive action jointly with the Sandinista police, grass-roots bodies and other institutions.

31. In 1988, the INSSBI also prepared programmes on increased popular participation, and with the use of adult education experience in the area of prevention it was possible to train primary school teachers to look after children's problems, especially in Region I, where 150 teachers were trained. In addition, 120 grass-roots promoters were trained at the national level, and community councils, parents schools and foster homes were established and strengthened.

32. Other significant progress lay in a number of studies on the situation of children, more particularly "Situation of minors in the Managua markets"; "Situation of minors in the Rural Children's Systems in Region IV"; "Effects of the war on children in the Río San Juan settlements" and "The psychological and social situation among street children in Region III".

33. Activities on behalf of war orphans include the national painting contest, "Children paint for peace and life", conducted with the support of the Sandinista Children's Association (ANS); recreational and cultural activities, camps, Christmas parties, periodic distribution of clothing for children, and the allocation of allowances, for a total of 16,470 war orphans throughout the country.

34. With regard to legal counselling, the Office for the Protection of Minors dealt with 1,704 cases, including rulings, family disputes, consideration of

files, statements, adoption, advisory assistance to the public, and so on. In addition, care was provided in 2,626 psycho-social cases, 32 per cent of which related to abandonment, 25 per cent to ill-treatment, 14 per cent to vagrancy and the remaining 29 per cent to larceny, neglect. drug addiction, etc.

35. Despite severe financial limitations, during 1988 care was provided for 36,794 minors in 197 institutional centres, i.e. an annual increase of 12.9 per cent, while the number of centres rose by only 3.7 per cent. This means that efficiency in the use of installed capacity was improved and the average coverage per centre rose by 9.0 per cent.

36. As a result of this popular participation, which took the form of initiatives promoted in work and community centres, 113 centres were put into operation and provided care for 6,484 minors. However, due to the economic crisis, 18 centres of this type were faced with serious restrictions on the care provided and some temporary closures were even necessary. The three existing women's training centres provided regular care for 176 of these young women, using appropriate rehabilitation and labour training methods.

37. Article 97 of the Social Security Act stipulates that an allowance for breast-feeding will be payable during the first six months of the child's life, subject to the following rules:

(a) Mothers will be encouraged to breast-feed;

(b) If the child is breast-fed, the Paediatric Medical Service will supply the mother with appropriate products for her good health;

(c) If the child is not breast-fed, he will be provided on a preferential basis with milk of a quality and amount and subject to instructions specified by the Paediatric Medical Service.

In both cases the product may be replaced with a cash equivalent paid directly to the child's mother. Similarly, article 18 of the Act states that, in the event of the mother's death or absence the breast-feeding allowance will be given to the person taking care of the child.

38. According to Ministry of Health figures, infant mortality and mortality of children from one to four years of age has been falling steadily. Despite a decrease to half of the 1978 estimate, there is still a high infant mortality rate, estimated at 64.5 per 1,000 live births in 1986. The following are the causes of infant mortality: acute diarrhoea, neo-natal death, pneumonia, septicaemia, malnutrition and meningitis.

39. Of the total number of medical examinations in 1986, 3,786,426 i.e. 58.5 per cent, involved children. The organized participation of the people in health management increased throughout the period, especially in vaccination programmes. This was in spite of the foreign exchange deficit in the health sector, a result of the worsening economic crisis and the hostilities, which have a direct adverse effect on the production sector, agricultural exports, and therefore the purchase of equipment and medicines. Recent data on the infant mortality rate indicate that from January to April 1989, compared with 1988, the figures were lower in all the months, with the except of March, the total for the period being 1,174 deaths in 1988 and 1,138 in 1989 (36 fewer deaths).

40. Since States must also set age limits under which the law prohibits and punishes child labour, article 40 of the amended Labour Code of Nicaragua stipulates that persons over 16 years of age are able to hire out their services. Persons under 16 but over 12 may do so only with the authorization of their parents or legal guardians, or, failing these, the person caring for them.

41. Article 122 of the Code stipulates that employers of workers over 12 and under 14 years of age must allow them to attend primary school. Persons under 16 years of age are prohibited from engaging in night work and must have a compulsory day of rest. Article 123 prohibits persons of either sex under 14 years of age from working in industrial enterprises.

42. Furthermore, article 552 of the Penal Code of Nicaragua states that anyone who engages in international trafficking in children for the purpose of prostitution or carnal relations commits the offence of trafficking in persons and will be liable to three to five years in prison.

B. Article 11. The right to an adequate standard of living

1. The food problem in Nicaragua

43. In Nicaragua as in the rest of Latin America, the level of development of its production forces and the features of its production and income structure reflected its underdevelopment. Most of the population did not have sufficient access to employment, land resources and other means of production to avoid poverty and destruction. More than three quarters of the rural population had no land at all or owned insignificant amounts under precarious conditions. These persons made up the abundant source of cheap seasonal labour required by the large cotton, coffee and sugar-cane producers. These conditions of poverty and underemployment were also found in the urban areas, where most of the population could only find unstable employment in various trade, services and construction activities.

44. During the revolutionary period, the nature of the food problem changed substantially. It has improved in the sense that there is less incidence of malnutrition, but at the same time there are greater complications in the problems of shortage, which arise periodically throughout the population, together with higher levels of food dependency.

45. In the past five years, a process of democratization in the pattern of demand and consumption has given certain sectors of the population greater access to meat, rice, oil, sugar, bread and infant formula. Due to these structural changes, it has been possible to reduce the incidence of malnutrition somewhat, although this progress has been slowed by the economic and military crisis in which Nicaragua is involved. These changes as well as population growth have caused a sharp increase in effective demand, which cannot be met by the productive system as it stands.

46. In view of this situation, Nicaragua is forced to import more food and raw materials required for the food industry, something which has increased the food system's degree of external dependency. However, the restrictions imposed by a growing gap in the availability of foreign exchange together with

greater problems of physical access (delays, blockade measures, etc.) to imports, means that supply is still being restricted, causing the gap with respect to demand to persist, unbalancing the market and thus creating the supply problems.

47. The food system is at the heart of the national economy, both because of the scale of the agro-food product intended for internal consumption or markets abroad and because of the many types of inter-sectoral flows between food production activities and other sectors, which vitalize and create jobs in other economic branches.

48. Production, processing and trade activities connected with the agro-food system account for approximately 40 per cent of GDP and create nearly 60 per cent of the nation's jobs, not counting added value and the employment created in certain tertiary activities connected with the system. In addition, exports of agro-food products and their principal by-products account for more than 80 per cent of foreign exchange.

49. For this reason, the economic programmes contain a series of measures which are examined below.

2. Standard of living

50. With regard to the standard of living, recovering traditional levels of productivity on the basis of economic incentives and mobilization of the people, casting aside the coercive mechanisms of the past, is a strategic task and must be promoted in view of the costs of the war and the deterioration in the external situation. This in turn calls for higher real wages and a trade policy that is suited to the peasantry.

51. The shortage in the full-time and seasonal rural work-force, which the country has been facing since the 1982-1983 period, will require a set of policies to attenuate the effects of the hostilities and improve the agricultural worker's standard of living, to encourage him to remain and establish himself at the production centre, and to create the proper conditions for attracting workers to those centres and maintaining the work-force there.

52. Price controls tied in with adjustments in wages and the exchange rate are a very significant point in the economic programmes, along with reviews of production costs and the monitoring of official retail prices.

53. The commitment is to give priority to the countryside over the city, with the aim of stimulating agricultural production, strengthening the social base in the countryside and reducing internal migration. It is, however, crucial to establish policies aimed at guaranteeing basic items for the production workers in the Pacific urban zone.

3. Economic policy guidelines with regard to the standard of living

54. The main production activities involve furthering the agrarian reform, increasing the production of basic grains and other foods, rearranging distribution with special emphasis on the peasant population, controlling prices of primary goods and services and increasing workers' output.

55. In this framework, attempts are made to promote the following:

(a) Serious attention to the grievances of tens of thousands of peasant families without land or with small amounts of poor-quality land, still remaining in various areas of the country, and strengthening the movement for the organization and internal cohesion of peasant families;

(b) To continue to make headway in intensive grain production projects in irrigated or unirrigated areas, which offer good climatic conditions and resolve social problems caused by the hostilities, and in assistance programmes aimed at improving peasant production, with special emphasis on bean output;

(c) To raise the level of exportable agricultural production and initiate a programme for strengthening the coffee-growing areas, chiefly in regard to crops in the most accessible modernized and semi-modernized areas with the best agro-ecological conditions;

(d) To begin a programme for reorganizing cattle slaughter and promote a policy aimed at raising the quality of dairy cattle produced by small and medium-sized farms in the traditional areas;

(e) To strengthen the nation's capacity for manufacturing products for peasant use, such as simple tools and work implements, household appliances and medicines;

(f) To support industrial clothing and shoe production, so as to ensure wage-earners and the peasant population a minimum share, while at the same time establishing mechanisms for greater control over the collection of the weekly output of small enterprises;

(g) To improve and strengthen current distribution networks and implement the global plan for combating speculation, hoarding and trade distortions;

(h) To alter the trend towards deterioration in the terms of trade for the countryside by broadening product supply and controlling agricultural and industrial production prices;

(i) To develop organizational and methodological bases for the organizing of labour, with a view to increasing economic efficiency and productivity;

(j) To provide more incentives for fulfilling and exceeding economic standards and plans of enterprises;

(k) To safeguard the value of real wages against inflation, by periodically reviewing the minimum wage scale.

4. Measures taken to develop or reform existing agrarian systems, in order to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources

56. One of the most direct measures taken by the Revolutionary Government has been the reform of existing agrarian systems and has led to a more rational

use and more efficient development of natural resources (especially land), thanks to the "Reform of the Agrarian Reform Act", in which item V states: "That the large estate system and other inefficient forms of land priority and utilization, which are an obstacle to development and progress, and the iniquitous exploitation of peasant labour by share-cropping, tenant farming and similar systems, must be overcome."

57. This is a matter of changing the social relations in the production process relations that have existed in Nicaragua for many years, for the peasantry, the true producers and workers of the land, were exploited by a small group of landowners who left the country when the revolution triumphed. The State has used these idle and ownerless lands to form the People's Property Area, where peasant co-operatives have been established. These are lands that have been confiscated and are a first step in the Agrarian Reform, which needs to be broader and more thorough. This measure is expected to give the peasants the right to live in dignity from their work on the land and guarantee their participation in the country's agricultural development.

5. Act establishing the National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production

58. The following are articles 1 to 8 of the Act establishing the National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production:

Article 1. The National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production is hereby established as a programme for co-ordination between the State and the peasants aimed at promoting the production and economic, social and organizational development of this sector and the economy as a whole.

Article 2. The following are among the main objectives of the National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production:

(a) To increase agricultural production by revitalizing and promoting peasant production, in particular of goods for internal consumption;

(b) To raise the standard of living of the poorest peasants and promote their economic and social development;

(c) To stimulate and strengthen the organization of the peasants, in particular by supporting the movement for co-operation and association in the countryside;

(d) To broaden and improve the peasants' levels of participation in economic and production management for the purpose of promoting agricultural development;

(e) To direct actions on a priority basis towards those producers who have been negatively affected by counter-revolutionary activity, in order to incorporate them into the economic life of the nation and strengthen peasant and co-operative production in the war zone.

Article 3. The National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production is based on the principal factors of interest to peasant production, such as land, credit and investments, supply, technical

assistance, marketing, education, training and organizational promotion, which should be furthered through consistent formulation and implementation.

Article 4. The following bodies are hereby established to conduct the National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production:

(a) The National Commission for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production, for the general purpose of co-ordinating the implementation of State policies, programmes and actions for the peasant sector;

(b) The Regional Production and Agrarian Reform Councils, which are executing agencies for the follow-up of agricultural production in all property sectors, especially production and organization;

(c) The Peasant Development Centres, which are bodies for the co-ordination and participation of the peasants at the grass-roots level and therefore the bodies established to strengthen the peasant production system.

Article 5. Without prejudice to the terms of the preceding article, other bodies to advance the Programme may be established by ministerial agreement.

Article 6. In order to provide support for peasant programmes aimed at the Fund for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production is hereby established, to be administered by the Directorate-General of Peasant Development and Agrarian Reform in the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Agrarian Reform.

Article 7. The Office of the Controller General of the Republic shall monitor and review the Fund's operations.

Article 8. The National Programme for the Development of Peasant and Co-operative Production, which will be operated by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Agrarian Reform, will be exempt from payment of any type of taxes.

6. Measures taken to improve methods of production and the quantity and quality of food produced, to increase the yield per unit of cultivated land and to improve methods of animal husbandry, animal health, by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, especially the technological system

59. The diversity of the technological systems used in food production is the outcome of a number of structural conditions inherited from the past, such as the concentration of income and wealth, the place of the Nicaraguan economy in the international market and the way in which foreign capital penetrates the national economy. These conditions created a fairly polarized technological structure, in which the great majority of agricultural producers were using traditional, low capital-intensive methods. On the other hand, there is a small group of production categories that use modern technologies.

60. This same technological polarization is also found in the food-processing industry, where on the one hand there is a sector composed of thousands of small units processing flour and maize or relatively simple products, and on

the other, a group of 100 medium-sized and large enterprises that are much more capital-intensive. This latter sector depends exclusively on foreign machinery and equipment and a generally out-dated technology, including what is called "obsolete" technology in the Western economies.

61. At the industrialization stage, for products such as oil and sugar the technological levels are high, in keeping with their part in the agricultural export sub-systems. The dairy industries also have capital-intensive technological systems.

62. MIDINRA has identified four levels for defining agricultural production technology:

(a) T1: The most traditional technology, characterized by clearing the land by hand, the use of unimproved seeds and hand-sowing on low-quality and generally very hilly land;

(b) T2: Intermediate technology, which also uses simple practices but features animal traction and a few inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides and/or improved seeds. Generally the crops are on better land;

(c) T3: This is for improved dry farming methods, using machinery, agro-chemicals and improved seeds intensively on high-quality land;

(d) T4: The modern technologies mentioned in (c) above, are combined with irrigation technologies.

63. The Revolutionary Government has established the following bodies for improving production methods:

(a) Directorate-General of Agricultural Technology: This agency guarantees the creation and transfer of technology and the application of technological standards to the nation's agricultural production in an attempt to increase production and productivity;

(b) Directorate-General of Livestock Technology: This agency guarantees the creation and transfer of technology and the application of technological standards to the nation's livestock production in an attempt to increase production and productivity.

7. Measures taken to improve and disseminate knowledge regarding methods of food conservation to reduce crop and post-harvest losses and to prevent degradation of resources

64. The Government has set up a programme to tackle and reduce post-harvest losses by the peasants, who have so far rarely achieved satisfactory results, on account, first of all, of the scattered population, secondly, because producers store their harvests in a very traditional way, and only hold onto the part intended for their own consumption, which is kept or stored in barns, nylon or plastic bags or barrels. Surplus production is sold off all at once, without taking advantage of a possible rise in prices.

65. A considerable amount of produce is considered to be lost during cultivation, harvest and storage; losses have been estimated at 25 per cent in

the case of maize, 27 per cent for beans and up to 30 per cent for rice and sorghum. The losses are mainly attributable to climatic and technological factors, rats, grubs, etc.

8. Soil conservation and water management

66. Few measures have so far been adopted to prevent the degradation of water and soil resources. The most recent measure, which was also the clearest illustration of a political determination to tackle the problem of the degradation of the country's soil and water by using a technical body trained in appropriate methods for identifying and solving problems of water and soil, was the incorporation of the Directorate for the Regulation and Management of Catchment Areas into the organizational structure of DIRENA.

67. The Directorate for the Regulation of Catchment Areas was established to carry out the appropriate research to diagnose the degree of degradation of resources, the demand for resources and the impact of the inhabitants of the catchment area on favourable or unfavourable conditions regarding natural resources.

68. The environmental problem affecting the catchment area and any conflicts over its use are identified by comparing current and potential resource utilization (supply and demand). A proposal can then be made for regulation and management of the catchment area, and guidelines for sectoral management (soil, water, vegetation and forest) as well as utilization policies.

69. Within this conceptual framework, work is under way on a priority basis on: (a) the upper and middle catchment areas of the Malacatoya River; (b) the southern catchment area of Managua Lake and (c) the catchment areas of the Héroes y Mártires de Veracruz Project.

70. Simultaneously, a "Water Law" is being prepared, together with standards for use of the Managua water table.

71. Standards for soil use and management at the national and regional levels and in the case of catchment areas for soils in the Pacific region, are at the consultancy stage; these standards are all based on a document which lays down the conceptual basis for standardization.

72. Furthermore, two soil conservation projects have begun: the Managua Central Erosion Project and the Western Central Erosion Project. They have led to the preparation of teaching models for soil use and conservation that have been sent to peasants, co-operatives and peasant education centres; all those concerned have drawn lessons from them and the conservation methods are currently being followed.

9. Measures taken to improve food distribution, such as the improvment of communication between production and food-marketing centres, the facilitation of access to markets, the introduction of price support and stabilization measures, the control of abusive practices and the assurance of minimum supplies to needy groups

73. ENABAS, which was set up in 1980, was designed as an enterprise for regulating the prices of food products and guaranteeing supplies to the

population. In order to ensure that ENABAS operates efficiently, it has proved necessary to set up a collection network or regional agricultural stores close to the productive sectors. At the same time, an infrastructure for distributing staple food products throughout the territory has been set up.

74. This enterprise is, moreover, responsible for food imports and donations, which it distributes throughout Nicaragua, giving priority to the most vulnerable sectors.

75. Between 1980 and 1985 the distribution network was extended and people's stores, shops, commissariats, travelling grocery units, supermarkets, and CATs were set up. There were 1,158 in 1980, and 6,890 in 1985.

76. In 1986 an operational assessment was made of the distribution system, priority was given to consumption sectors and product distribution channels and the territorial network was cut back and reduced by 21 per cent in comparison with the previous year. In 1987 it was reduced further, by 32 per cent, although the number of commissariats in enterprises rose from 103 to 271. In 1988 the infrastructure was less extensive than in 1987, although it included people's stores, supermarkets and markets.

77. Market access has been made easier by extending the urban transport system, which the population uses to go to markets, and facilities have been provided for producers by improved transport and access to urban centres.

78. As to price support and stabilization measures, in 1983 the Consumer Protection Act was adopted as a price stabilization measure, and in 1989, despite the introduction of unrestricted sale of staple products, the policy of maintaining a network of retail establishments authorized to sell at controlled prices was adopted, thereby bringing benefits to the majority of the population. Again, the policy of providing a subsidy in kind (25 pounds of food for workers in the budgeted state sector and retired persons) was adopted in 1988 and it continued up to 1989.

10. Measures taken to improve food consumption levels and nutrition, with particular reference to the most vulnerable groups of the population

79. In the first three years following the triumph of the revolution (1980-1982) there was an increase in the average consumption of most foods, followed in subsequent years by a drop in the levels of consumption of several products.

80. Changes have also taken place in the diet, something reflected in the increased consumption figures for chicken, eggs, rice, beans, flour and oil and the decline in maize and sugar consumption.

81. As far as rural social classes are concerned, two features should be emphasized:

(a) Seasonal variations in consumption levels, not only when supplies increase after the harvests, but also when there is a marked rise in family income;

(b) It may be assumed that, although the consumption levels in the case of the peasants are generally inadequate, they have access to a more varied diet than do farm labourers.

82. In 1982, CIERA conducted a study in low-income districts of Managua which identified a number of changes in the diet linked to the consumption of highly processed foods and reflected in the demand for products such as Maggi soup, mayonnaise, margarine, tinned fruit, biscuits, mineral water and powdered milk.

83. One of the measures taken to improve the food consumption level of the most vulnerable population groups, has been a certain standardization of food consumption patterns throughout the various social or income sectors; i.e. the typical diet of specific urban sectors is nowadays less varied (low-income sectors eat less beef, while processed food is less readily available to middle-income sectors).

84. Other studies carried out in the rural area of Managua revealed that peasants belonging to co-operatives had changed their diet, which prior to the revolution had mainly comprised rice, beans, maize and cassava; on account of higher income as a result of access to land, credit, etc., they tend to consume a greater amount of meat and perishable products.

85. The same study found that the State policy of democratizing food supply had facilitated access to a range of calorie-rich foods. This has made for acceptable levels of calorie intake for lower-income families and no great change has been identified in calorie consumption by income group. Quite the opposite has occurred as regards protein intake: higher-income families consume more than the recommended levels of products such as meat, milk and eggs, which are rich in protein and which have not been subject to price regulation policies or planned supply; low-income families consume less than the minimum.

86. Generally speaking, the study on consumption in the districts of Managua found that the average calorie and protein intake of the families studied stood at the recommended levels. However, within the lower-income groups, they only amounted to 80 per cent of the recommended level, while in the higher-income categories the levels of calorie and protein intake were respectively 120 and 140 per cent of those recommended.

11. Measures adopted to reduce food adulteration and contamination, and to improve the quality and safety of food, throughout market and storage levels, and to improve food hygiene at all levels

Health measures

87. Food is taken to mean any natural or artificial product, whether or not processed, whose consumption provides the human body with the nourishment and energy necessary to perform its biological processes.

88. The Ministry of Health:

(a) Lays down the regulations necessary to organize and perform activities in the fields of health and hygiene, and issues sanitary regulations to control raw material and finished products, from the production process to the sale of food;

(b) Draws up technical standards to identify, monitor and make up for malnutrition, as well as help to prevent it;

(c) Regulates all matters connected with the enrichment and fortification of foods;

(d) Ensures sanitary supervision of exports and imports of food for human consumption or of raw foodstuffs, as well as over the sale of processed and unprocessed food.

Only food additives approved by the Ministry of Health may be used in Nicaragua.

Progress in standard-setting

89. Regulations have been drawn up covering the sale of dairy products.

90. The hygiene committee for foods on the food CODEX has been established.

Protection of food

(a) Monitoring system for the dairy industry (milk and by-products), Third Region;

(b) Monitoring system for meat by-products;

(c) Initiation of a study into pesticide residues in food;

(d) Initiation of periodic sanitary inspections in the food industry.

12. Measures taken to disseminate knowledge of the principles of nutrition

91. One measure adopted by the Ministry of Education to disseminate and introduce principles concerning food and nutrition has been the curriculum reform process, with the following objectives:

(a) A review of teaching programmes to integrate a component on nutrition;

(b) Strengthening and gradually extending food and nutrition as subjects in the curricula from first to sixth grade of EGB (General Basic Education), drawing on the experience acquired in the ERET level;

(c) Proposals for changes to the nutritional content of the natural science and Spanish curricula during the fundamental stage (first to fourth grade of EGB);

(d) Personnel training in experiments in education on food and nutrition;

(e) Educational measures using the mass media.

ANNEX

NICARAGUAN FOOD PROGRAMME

1. In an attempt to tackle the complex situation facing Nicaragua, in 1982 the Government decided to try and unite the efforts of peasants, agricultural entrepreneurs, city workers and consumers in general in a priority programme of the revolution known as the Nicaraguan Food Programme (PAN).

2. Under Decree No. 125 of 10 June 1983, PAN's task is "to co-ordinate action aimed at achieving national food security in regard to food production". Accordingly, in order to undertake its activities PAN involves two major activities: planning and the execution of specific projects.

The 1986-1989 period

3. During this period, the Planning Directorate worked as the counterpart of the CADESCA/EEC Food Security Programme for the Central American isthmus and of FAO's GCP/NIC/018/NET project.

4. During this period, a qualitative breakthrough was made, in so far as a basic and systematized set of data on nutrition was built up, and, in conjunction with the basic studies, it has also made for a clearer view of the approach to be followed in tackling the problem and contributing to potential solutions.

Basic food basket

5. The Planning Directorate drew up a proposal to standardize the methodology used in preparing a basic food basket. The preparation of the proposal involved the Planning and Budget Secretariat, the Ministry of the Economy, Industry and Trade (MEIC), the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health and the Nicaraguan Statistics and Census Institute.

6. The proposal was justified by the fact that several food baskets are worked out by different methods, depending on the aims of each agency; hence, a single method makes it possible to adopt a single standard of reference and facilitates decision making and inter-agency activities.

7. The proposed methodology took into consideration the actual restrictions affecting a survival economy under the following conditions:

(a) The national average size of an urban family; i.e. six members;

(b) The proposed basket only satisfies 85 per cent of the average kilocalorie requirements of the population;

(c) It should reflect the consumer behaviour of the Nicaraguan population;

(d) It was designed in accordance with scientific methods recommended by international organizations and on the basis of national statistical data.

8. It includes the following products:

(a) Cereals and cereal products: rice, tortilla, pinole, bread;

(b) Pulses: beans;

(c) Sugar;

(d) Oil and butter;

(e) Meat: beef, pork, chicken;

(f) Dairy products: skimmed milk, whole milk, cheese;

(g) Eggs.

9. The total calorie intake was set at 1,850 kilocalories per person per day.

10. Supply and demand for the above products is monitored, as are their prices in relation to income, in order to investigate access to food.

A proposal for a system of food and nutrition monitoring: a multisectoral approach

11. Through the Planning Directorate, PAN convened various State bodies such as ENABAS, the Planning and Information Science Department of MIDINRA, the central Ministry of the Economy, Industry and Trade (MEIC), the Ministry for Foreign Co-operation, the Nicaraguan Statistics and Census Institute (INEC), the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health to set up a Food and Nutrition Monitoring System, designed to constitute a systematic and on-going process for collecting, transmitting, analysing and interpreting data to provide up-to-date knowledge of the food and nutrition situation and also to identify problems, causes and trends, to forecast changes in food availability, consumption and supply and to propose any preventive or emergency measures necessary to change the situation. As the food and nutrition problem springs from many causes, it is clearly necessary to draw the relevant data from a wide range of sectors: consequently, the Food and Nutrition Monitoring System is a valuable tool for planning and co-ordinating programmes of action.

Macro-economic policy and its impact on food security

12. The State has taken steps designed to improve the food situation and the population's standard of living through the implementation of various measures and policies with an impact on food production, prices, foreign trade, marketing, distribution and consumption. However, most of these policies have been adversely affected by external and domestic factors such as the economic blockade, military aggression and more recently the activities of certain members of COSEP (Supreme Council of Private Enterprise).

13. In addition, in order to achieve food security priority must be attached to the most vulnerable groups of the population and a more significant role must be given to the agricultural sector inasmuch as its activity will be influenced by the framework of the principal macro-economic policies. The potential repercussions of economic policy measures on the food situation therefore need to be examined in detail.

Research into food consumption

14. Through INEC, the Planning and Budget Secretariat has carried out periodic research into current trends in order to measure the impact of economic adjustments on the labour situation. PAN will join in the efforts undertaken by INEC to extend this research into food consumption to 2,000 urban and rural homes in the Third Region. The aim is to obtain a fairly precise knowledge of calorie intake per person per day, based on age, sex, occupation and income level. A further aim is to identify the foods that provide the calories, the cost and the ways in which they are obtained, and to measure the gap between the recommendations and actual results.

Directorate of Food Security Projects: report on activities 1987-1989

15. The Directorate of Food Security Projects is a functional unit within PAN responsible for the assessment, follow-up and monitoring of food projects; it also promotes studies, plans and projects designed to ensure self-sufficiency in food and nutrition.

16. One of its main tasks is managing financial and material resources provided either on a Government-to-Government basis or by non-governmental organizations, in order to foster the development of co-operatives, production collectives, small individual producers and small kitchen gardens kept by families, communes, schools and institutions.

17. The Directorate implements the Five-Year Food and Nutrition Plan and the Popular Mobilization Programme for food self-sufficiency.

Five-Year Food and Nutrition Plan

18. The Five-Year Food and Nutrition Plan (PQAN) was introduced in the second half of 1985 after preparations from 1982 to 1984. In terms of its logical framework, i.e. its aims, strategies and activities, PQAN is designed to support food and nutrition activities undertaken within the framework of Primary Health Care and Food Security for the purpose of obtaining background information and inputs in order to establish a National Food and Nutrition Planning System. It is a macro-planning model for food and nutrition policies designed for trial implementation in the country's First and Second Regions, before being extended throughout the nation between 1987 and 1989.

19. The project is funded by a contribution of $4,600,000 from the Italian Government, spread over five years (1985-1989). So far global expenditure amounts to $3,100,000, leaving a balance of $1,500,000 which will make it possible to hold completion of the first phase over until the end of 1990. A second phase, from 1991 to 1995, could be supported by additional funds, depending on the success achieved by the end of 1990, as assessed from the trial implementation of the test project for food and nutrition monitoring, which has been implemented on a sound community and multisectoral basis in 16 communities in the First and Second Regions.

Popular Mobilization Programme for Food Self-sufficiency

20. In 1983 the National Reconstruction Government decided to set up high-level commissions for research into the population's food supply situation and subsequently for them to propose corrective measures in technical and operational policy.

21. The Commission on Basic Grains and Perishable Products was already in existence, and in July 1983 it prepared a proposal for the creation of a programme to integrate grass-roots participation in order partly to solve the problems of food self-sufficiency.

22. Subsequently, in August 1983, the Government Junta authorized the establishment of the above programme by means of a governmental agreement whereby MIDINRA was given responsibility for implementing the programme through PAN.

23. The general aims of the Popular Mobilization Programme (PMPA) include the following:

(a) To stabilize the production of perishable crops by applying improved technology based on the use of irrigation and soil mechanization;

(b) To encourage the production of perishable products in the vicinity of the main consumer centres, in order to cut transport costs and the role of intermediaries;

(c) To encourage the population to participate in producing its own food, in order to safeguard workers' wages and to improve the food quality.

24. The basic measures supported by PMPA are as follows:

(a) Credit: channelled through the National Development Bank in direct support of the regional credit line;

(b) Technical assistance: it was previously rather ineffective on account of the poor calibre of personnel at the regional and/or zonal level, lack of an organized technical assistance strategy, scattered producers throughout areas where access is difficult and scant links between specialists and producers;

(c) Supply: Technical Materials Supply (ATM) provided support for the three lines of action at the national level: it comprised the supply of seeds and distribution of tools and/or implements, as well as of some chemicals for agricultural use and spare parts;

(d) Training: this allowed a number of activities including courses and seminars, workshops and national meetings to be carried out to ascertain the levels of training of PMPA specialists and at the same time draw up technical guidelines to improve technical assistance to producers.

25. It should be stressed that PMPA is financed by external funds from non-governmental organizations and friendly Governments.

26. Between 1984, when PMPA's operational activities began, and 1989, the international community considerably increased its support in providing financial and material resources for productive activities by means of donations with which the following equipment was acquired:

180 irrigation units,

6 agricultural machines (tractors),

25 vehicles,

39 motorcycles,

12 marine engines,

60 dwellings,

Others (tools, seeds, training, teaching and outreach material, etc.).

Development of production and popular participation

27. As a result of the support received between 1984 and 1988, PAN considerably increased participation in production both in terms of area and the number of kitchen gardens as indicated below.

Number of kitchen gardens and area under cultivation

Category */	1984		1988		Absolute variation	
	No.	Area	No.	Area		
Regional	17	239	54	1 978	37	1 739
Institutional	608	315	1 056	17 675	448	17 360
Family	2 440	220	53 894	1 500	51 454	1 280
TOTAL	3 065	774	55 004	21 153	51 939	20 379

*/ As can be seen, institutions account for the largest area under cultivation within the various categories, while families account for the greatest number of kitchen gardens. Most of the resources channelled into these two categories (institutions and families) are in the form of tools, seeds, training and outreach material.

28. One direct form of action within PAN's new of action categories is the creation of institutional and family kitchen gardens in the urban sector, involving grass-roots participation by approximately 70,000 people with potential benefits in terms of self-sufficiency for some 500,000 people, i.e. 15 per cent of the population. The benefits will be the production of basic grains, root vegetables and tubers, fruit and bananas.

29. In view of the considerable success achieved by the support given to institutional and family gardens, PAN is making major efforts to give a greater thrust to these activities, bearing in mind the continued support that non-governmental organizations will continue to provide.

30. As to regional action which comprises intensive and staggered production of perishable produce on plots in the vicinity of the main urban centres in each region, the plots are supplied with agricultural machinery, irrigation equipment, tools, seeds, etc. It is in this category that PAN has channelled fixed investment to develop specialized production using irrigation.

31. So far a total of 118 irrigation units have been distributed, 85 of them provided by non-governmental organizations and 33 through the Government of Denmark (DANIDA project). This equipment provides installed capacity sufficient to irrigate an area of 1,095 Mzs, */ of which 661 Mzs are in operation, and installation of 434 Mzs is pending.

32. This investment is made in all Regions and Special Zones II and III. It should be stressed that the zones that have benefited most have been those most affected by the drought, particularly the Pacific Regions and more specifically the Second and Third Regions.

33. It is impossible not to mention the considerable importance and interest aroused by family kitchen gardens, as families living in the communities have become deeply involved in establishing such gardens, which occasionally cover more than 3 Mzs, the produce is for consumption by the persons concerned, any perishable surplus is sold.

Promotion and extension

34. After a year in which there was little publicity, an intensive nationwide radio and television campaign was arranged to encourage the cultivation of gardens by families, schools and communities.

35. In order to improve both its coverage and the yields of the various horticultural crops, PAN worked in close co-operation with the Ministry of Education and the Community Movement CDS in order to encourage the training of small-scale producers, educators, pupils, community leaders and persons responsible for kitchen gardens.

36. Training was co-ordinated with the Higher Institute of Agricultural Science (ISCA) which helped to plan eight seminars with the guidance of four agronomists, and training was provided at the seminars for over 200 participants.

37. ISCA has also supplied 40 student agronomists, who will provide technical assistance to the various state and private schools, as well as to allotments and commune kitchen gardens.

38. In order to achieve this objective, PAN defrayed the cost of the publicity campaign mentioned above and also prepared practical documentation to provide guidance on seeds and pest and disease control in order to provide technical guidance on the development of this activity.

39. It also collected vegetable seeds produced in the country's interior as well as significant quantities of seed in the form of donations, which as a whole have been used to satisfy the demand from producers. The seeds are being distributed throughout Nicaragua by the network set up by PROAGRO in the various regions.

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*/ Translator's note: In Central America a manzana (Mzs) is approximately 1.75 acres.

School kitchen gardens

40. Towards the middle of March 1989 activities were initiated in connection with the plan for school kitchen gardens.

41. The first measure involved a series of visits to the gardens kept by various schools and the immediate requirements which PAN was capable of satisfying were identified. The inquiries pointed to the manifest need in all schools for seeds, tools and, above all, technical assistance and training.

42. In view of the need to train pupils and teachers in horticultural management, it was decided to run workshops in six State and private schools, where, with the exception of the "Zulema Baltodano" college, whose needs will be met directly at the request of the school, training was provided on growing vegetables. MED will co-ordinate the remaining State schools, in which it has not been possible to carry out any activities during the first half of the year, and supply 14 kg of mixed seeds to the various schools.

43. In addition, a number of visits were made to private educational establishments to offer PAN's co-operation with each school's kitchen garden programme, as in the case of State schools. The common requirements of all schools were seeds, tools and training.

44. The following educational establishments received assistance from PAN:

(a) State: Zulema Baltodano;

(b) Private: Hispano Nicaraguense, Teresiano, Asunción, La Salle, Calazans.

45. The Directorate of Agriculture and Nutrition of MED is responsible for co-ordination among the remaining educational establishments.

Evaluation of the funds provided by non-governmental organizations

46. During its four years of existence, PMPA has handled total donations of approximately $4,500,000, i.e. 71 per cent from non-governmental organizations and 28.9 per cent from Governments. With these funds the following were purchased:

85 irrigation units via NGOs;

33 irrigation units via the Government of Denmark;

6 agricultural machines (Kubota tractors);

25 vehicles (pick-ups, automobiles);

39 motor cycles;

37 dwellings;

Others (tools, seeds, training, teaching and outreach material, etc.).

47. In addition to the material resources, the co-operating organizations provide support in the form of technical assistance from personnel trained in the various productive aspects of food and agriculture.

48. These resources have been put to use in PAN's activities to increase the availability of food to the population.

49. Reports have been submitted to non-governmental organizations on the following projects:

Name	Organization	United States dollars
"G. Hernández" food production co-operative ZE-III	Evan-Frauenarbeit, Germany	15 889
DANIDA Project for the installation of 36 irrigation units	Government of Denmark	1 300 000
Project for the collection of vegetable seeds R-III	Development and Peace	23 750
Production of vegetables by institutions	War on Want, United Kingdom	34 051
"P. Altamirano" miscellaneous collective horticultural project R-III	Terre des Hommes, Switzerland	36 832
"La Granja" collective project for the development of horticulture and irrigation	Development and Peace, Canada	31 449
"Laguna de Perlas" collective horticultural project ZE-II	Development and Peace, Canada	3 359
"Fanor Urroz" co-operative horticultural project R-III	Oxfam, United Kingdom	7 294

50. So far reports covering total expenditure of $1,460,757 have been submitted to the various organizations.

51. Between June 1988 and June 1989 a total of $3,447,626 was made available (see para. 49 above) and the following investments were approved:

(a) Development of horticulture and irrigation R-IV: $176,000;

(b) Collection of vegetable seeds: $23,750.

Housing policies

52. There are three main axes to housing policy in Nicaragua:

(a) Agrarian reform;

(b) Planning and production of dwellings (rural and urban); and

(c) Emergency programmes for marginal districts.

53. The Ministry of Housing pursues the following fundamental aims:

(a) Housing: to ensure that proper housing in the full sense of the word, including land, infrastructure and social amenities, in addition to housing for the family is available, for low-income sectors and in particular those involved in production;

(b) Urban development: to rationalize, regulate and monitor the growth of the towns with a view to achieving balanced regional development based on an efficient and equitable distribution of resources throughout Nicaragua.

Urban reform

54. The Government has enacted a series of laws, the most important being the following, which are designed to alter the structure of urban land ownership, to eradicate speculation and gradually transform urban land and dwellings into a social service free from any mercantile notions:

Illegal Housing Developments Act.

55. On 22 September 1979 the Government Junta for National Reconstruction promulgated Decree No. 97, whereby it took steps to take over and manage the land and rent from the so-called illegal housing developments in urban and suburban areas throughout the country.

56. The Act provided support for measures taken against 420 illegal housing developments on the grounds of their failure to comply with the minimum town planning requirements, and ensured security of tenure for 84,000 families, representing 63 per cent of the country's urban population.

57. The National Office for Housing Developments under Government Control, which was established by the Act, began to receive the mortgage payments paid by the occupiers to the property developer, and used the income to construct the infrastructure lacking, relocate families living on unsuitable locations, etc.; more than 31,000 families benefited from these measures.

58. On 19 July 1981 a decree cancelled the debts of debtors living in housing developments over which the Government had taken control, and in 1982 the Ownership Act was promulgated in order to facilitate the procedure.

Tenants Act

59. The Tenants Act was passed in January 1980 in order to "regulate tenant-landlord relations, on the principle that housing should meet a social need and consequently must not be a means of enrichment".

60. More than 75,000 families have benefited from the Act and the subsequent amendments. Security of tenure has been guaranteed to 39.5 per cent of the urban population, arbitrary expulsions have ceased and rentals proportional to the valuation of the housing introduced; provision has also been made for action, at the request of tenants, in districts where living conditions are unsatisfactory.

Land Use Act

61. In September 1980 the Land Use Act, covering Human Settlements Development Areas, was adopted in order to rationalize and optimize investment in city infrastructure and services. The Act empowered MINVAH, subsequently replaced by the municipal councils, to regulate and monitor urban land use by means of development and regulatory plans.

Expropriations Act for Undeveloped Urban Areas

62. In December 1981 the Government Junta for National Reconstruction promulgated the Expropriation Act for undeveloped urban areas in order to streamline the implementation of projects with a social objective and to try and ensure that urban land was treated "so as to fulfil its social role, as a resource at the service of the population as a whole, in view of which the State is responsible for deciding on its rational and proper use". The Act empowered MINVAH, subsequently replaced by the municipal councils to expropriate by means of ministerial decree, of land necessary for the development of projects in the public interest and of use to society. The Act gave a marked impetus to the implementation of current urban projects by providing immediate access to the land most suitable for urban development.

Housing

63. Efforts to meet the housing demand by public investment were directed through a programme to build houses and provide the amenities for housing estates on the basis of the following activities:

Housing complexes

64. These are projects for the construction of new urban developments and housing equipped with basic infrastructure services.

65. This type of housing, which was built by specialized State firms, is designed to meet the needs of urban workers and workers in production centres. Over the decade, 12,094 such units were built, i.e. 47 per cent of the units built by the State during the period. Forty two per cent of them were intended for agricultural and mine workers.

Incremental urban developments

66. Under this programme families were provided free of charge with building sites with minimum urban services, in areas suitable for the development of housing, while areas necessary for the subsequent development of the required social infrastructure were held in reserve.

67. The estates were initially provided with drinking water from stand-pipes, streets and with material for the construction of individual latrines. The beneficiaries of this programme undertook to contribute to the subsequent development of the infrastructure networks as the country's economic circumstances allowed.

68. Although in general the dwellings constructed under these projects are makeshift and built from left-over materials, security of ownership of their plot has encouraged families gradually to improve them. During the period 33,985 such plots were developed, including 19,444 in Managua (57.2 per cent).

Housing improvements and materials bank

69. Incremental urban developments were complemented by the Materials Bank Programme, whereby families were provided with building materials, skilled labour and technical and administrative support to build basic housing units of 36 m^2; most of which are built of reinforced masonry or prefabricated concrete components, without amenities or services. Under these programmes, district organizations provide additional labour and help to select beneficiaries.

70. Under this programme 6,951 units have been built, 4,164 of them (60 per cent) in Managua.

Peasant settlements

71. After 1982, with the intensification of the war of aggression, it became necessary to meet the needs of peasant families affected by counter-revolutionary activities who were living in isolation and wanted to move closer to one another for self-defence purposes.

72. Three basic criteria determined the siting of these settlements:

(a) Defence: locations were chosen to ensure greater security for the population living in combat zones;

(b) Production: settlements were located in places where there was sufficient land to develop agriculture;

(c) Services: settlements were provided with basic facilities and infrastructure.

73. The most common type of construction in these settlements is a basic 36 m^2 module similar to the urban modules. In many settlements the first part of the building to be constructed was a roof in order to provide families with immediate shelter, and the walls and floors of dwellings were built later with community support. About 300 new settlements were built under this programme, comprising a total of 10,017 dwellings built in the face of great adversity: they were scattered and the projects were difficult to read, both because of the state of the roads and of the presence of enemy forces in the area, which accounted for the deaths of many builders, workers and specialists.

74. In order to carry out this building effort it was necessary to develop a system of enterprises capable of meeting the technical requirements for the production and construction of housing.

75. During the period in question, 12 building materials plants were set up and firmly established throughout the country, 8 regional building firms specialized in houses were established, as well as 3 consultancy firms and 2 construction supplies enterprises.

Conclusions

76. As a whole, these 10 years may be divided into two quite distinct phases. The first from the triumph of the Revolution up until 1985, was marked by a greater housing construction. During the first years of the Revolution, construction was designed to satisfy urban demand and the need to consolidate the labour force in the main production and export centres. The priority sectors were mining (Rosita, Siuna, Bonanza, El Limón mine); sugar production (the Benjamin Zeledón, Javier Guerra, Germán Pomares, Julio Buitrago and Camilo Ortega sugar mills); banana production (El Viejo and Tonalá), and the Rigoberto López rice plant.

77. The second phase began in 1986, when the exhaustion of the national economy by the imperialist agression called for a considerable cut-back in investment in the social sector, on account of which there was a sharp drop in housing construction. In February 1988, the Government broke up the organization of MINVAH into various agencies and transferred most of its responsibilities to the municipal councils.

78. It should be stressed that, in order to guarantee access by low-income social sectors to the housing that was built, the State provided the housing on the basis of a 20-year option for sale and with heavy subsidies, on account of which return on investment has been scant and has failed to generate a multiplier effect. In addition, persons who had undertaken to purchase a total of 15,000 dwellings built with BAVINIC funds during the Somoza period, as well as 12,000 units built during the current period, benefited from the cancellation of their debts, as decreed in February 1988.

79. As it stands on the threshold of the phase of reconstruction and bearing in mind the country's enormous needs, the national economy is hardly able to finance large-scale housing construction plans and the implementation of any plans will depend on external funds.